

Newspapers get their advertising from loop merchants and play the loop game.

The Big Business of Chicago is the cold-blooded business of converting men, women and children into money and getting that money into the hands of as few people as possible.

They hedged in the loop with the elevated railways. They made the people come into the loop to get from one end of town to another. They want to tax the people all over the town to build subways for the benefit of the loop and loop business.

They are going to let the Pennsylvania railroad help play the loop game by building elevated freight tracks that will shut most of the West Side off from the loop, so that business will stay in the loop and go up in the air instead of spreading west.

Then they'll let the railroads gobble up land that will keep business from going south.

And in the meantime the Marshall Field estate keeps on buying land in the loop—land for more stores, more office buildings, more skyscrapers, more hotels, more buildings of all kinds to set traps for the people and bring them and their money into the loop.

The people all over town are taxed for money to clean the streets, and the first streets cleaned and kept clean are the streets in the loop. The last streets cleaned are the ones the people live on.

The people all over town are taxed for millions to build boulevards for automobiles and newspaper autos and wagons; and nothing is done for the men, women and children who ride on street cars because they can't afford automobiles.

I stood on the top floor of a high building the other day and looked out over the loop. As I thought of the kind of people all the great buildings housed, and the tricks that were played upon the people in the offices of the mighty in these buildings, the thought came to me: Here is hell.

Millions upon millions of watered bonds and stock have been issued in the loop—gas, electric, street railway, telephone and other public service corporations have issued them. Their franchises give them the right to tax the people for the money to pay the interest on the watered bonds and stock.

A street car fare is a tax. It is paid to the conductor instead of to the city or county treasurer. There is a water tax, a telephone tax, a gas tax, an electric tax, a clothing tax, a food tax, a tax on everything we eat, wear, drink or use.

Land values are high in the loop, and hence rentals are high. But the people who buy in the loop pay all the loop taxes, all the loop rentals.

And street railways are operated to bring buyers into the loop. If it were not for the water in street railway bonds and stock Chicago people could ride for a three-cent fare and get universal transfers and good service—just as the people get this service in Cleveland for three cents.

And they are talking of spending millions of the people's money to build subways, when they haven't yet learned to operate the cars they have for the benefit of the people.

What the people of Chicago should demand of the mayor and council is decent street railway service NOW.

Make the companies make good their past promises before granting them new privileges as the price for doing what they ought to have done long ago. It's an old trick—that getting a franchise by agreeing to do certain things, and then refusing to do them unless additional privileges are granted.